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**LATINX WOMEN'S GROUP ANNOUNCES NEW  
LEADERSHIP AS IT APPROACHES 10 YEAR  
ANNIVERSARY**

*Founder Nurys Camargo hands over reigns of board leadership and planning to nationally recognized entrepreneur and community organizer Malia Lazu*

**BOSTON** - *Chica Project*, a strength-based youth leadership program rooted in cultural competency and the celebration of Latinx culture throughout Massachusetts, today announces its change of leadership within its membership board.

Nurys Camargo's successor, [Malia Lazu](#), was officially voted onto the board as the organization's new Board Chair. Malia is known throughout Massachusetts and across the Country as an award winning, tenured strategist in diversity and inclusion and in economic development and urban entrepreneurship.

Nurys was recently appointed as a Commissioner for the Massachusetts Cannabis Control. For the past several years she led statewide, municipal and community relations for AT&T as their regional Director of External Affairs in New England. Prior to that, Nurys served in Governor Patrick's administration as his Senior Policy Advisor at the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security.

"The exciting news is that the future of Chica Project is strong and in good hands," said Nurys. "I know that Malia will do a terrific job, and I'm sure she'll love working with this family as much as I have."

Nurys Camargo founded Chica Project in 2011 with the understanding that the primary impediments to many young women of color is a lack of access to meaningful opportunities and safe spaces in which to display fully one's potential and know-how in navigating systems that help move one ahead in life.

"I started this not knowing much about non-profit management or fundraising, with only ten participants from around the state, dedicated volunteers, mentors and a few dollars," said Nurys. "Ten years later, I've been blessed and sincerely grateful for everyone who invested time, energy, sweat and tears, and the funding to make certain that we continue providing unconditional love and

successful programming to every one of our participants – all for the purpose of helping level the playing field in our communities.”

In her most recent role as Executive Vice President & Regional President at Berkshire Bank, Malia expanded access to capital for predominantly communities of color. She also helped to diversify the board of directors; developed a suite of financial products and programs that support entrepreneurs of color; and launched *ReevX Labs*, a collaborative workspace and innovation hub for the urban start-up community.

"I have been a fan of Chica Project's work since they started, seeing Nurys pour her heart and soul into building such a powerful organization," said Malia. "It is an honor to continue her legacy and support the team into Chica Project's future."

Malia has also created and led a number of socially responsible business accelerators across Boston. She worked with the city to create *Accelerate Boston*, which helped launch over twenty minority businesses in its first five years and continues to help minority entrepreneurs raise capital. And she has launched and founded numerous organizations and initiatives over the years, including *Future Boston Alliance (Epicenter)*, *The Urban Labs at M.I.T.*, *Mass VOTE*, and has led culture-shifting campaigns for such activists and luminaries as Harry Belafonte, Peter Lewis, and George Soros.

"I'm looking forward to helping Chica Project continue it's work to close the opportunity gap for Latinas and Women of Color and to taking it to the next level of expansion," said Malia. "What Chica has always represented in our communities and throughout the Commonwealth – and will more so now more than ever – is the enduring power of women."

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### **About Chica Project**

Since June 2011, **Chica Project** has delivered a strength-based youth leadership program rooted in cultural competency and the celebration of Latinx culture throughout Massachusetts. Supported by its esteemed group of board members including Latinx and women leaders in business and academia, and recently recognized by former First Lady Michelle Obama, **Chica Project** has now served over 700 Latinas and other Women of Color. Today, over 160 Latina youth in Boston, Lawrence, and Lynn, and other young women in underserved Massachusetts communities who attend its community-based programming called *Queens Rise*, receive mentoring, leadership workshops, and career/college coaching from over 60 volunteers.

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